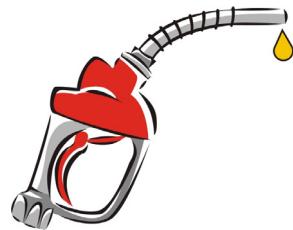




Missouri Department of Natural Resources

# THE MISSOURI GUZZLER



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## Commuters Pay Twice as Much for Fuel Many Ignore Government Program that Cut Costs in Half

Even as gas prices frequently flirt with the \$3 per gallon level, many commuters continue to ignore a government program that could help them cut their fuel costs in half.

Mid-Missouri Rideshare, managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Energy Center, offers some commuters the opportunity to save more than \$1,700 annually. By calling Mid-Missouri Rideshare at (573) 522-RIDE (7433), commuters can find other commuters interested in sharing rides and saving money.

"There are a number of measures people can take to save 5 or 10 percent, but carpooling is the only way to cut those costs in half immediately," said Director Doyle Childers. "Adding more people to the carpool can increase savings to 66 or 75 percent."

However, the bulk of commuters hardest hit by rising gas prices – those who drive more than an hour a day to and from work – continue to ignore this proven money-saving technique.



Department of Natural Resources Director Doyle Childers speaks at a news conference in a Columbia commuter parking lot in August. Childers was promoting carpooling and Mid-Missouri Rideshare's new phone number (573) 522-RIDE (7433).

A survey of morning commuters quickly reveals that many drivers continue to make the trip to work alone. By adding just one additional rider to the trip, the typical driver (making an 80-mile, roundtrip in a vehicle getting 25 miles per gallon) can save \$1,152 annually. Two riders result in \$1,536 in savings, while a full car (three passengers and a driver) can yield savings of \$1,728. To find out how much

you can save through carpooling or to find out about programs in St. Louis, Kansas City or Springfield, visit the Department of Natural Resources' Web site at [www.dnr.mo.gov/energy/transportation/ride.htm](http://www.dnr.mo.gov/energy/transportation/ride.htm).

In addition to saving money on gas, Rideshare participants also save from lower transportation costs, suffer less from traffic-related stress and help the environment by cutting vehicle exhausts.

## Backseat Drivers May Mean Extra Moola for Motorists

Tips from that nagging parent, in-law, spouse or co-worker in the backseat could actually put extra cash in the wallets of motorists if heeded.

Though backseat advice may seem like an annoyance, much of it improves a vehicle's fuel efficiency, in turn, saving money at the pump. Some advice worth following:

- **What's with the lead foot?**  
**Slow down!** On the highway, most vehicles get about 20 percent more miles per gallon at 55 miles per gallon than at 70 miles per gallon.
- **For the love of Mike, stop slamming on the brakes!**  
Minimize braking by anticipating speed changes. Let off the accelerator as soon as you observe a red light or stop sign ahead. This saves gas and complaints from the peanut gallery.
- **You can't take this road at rush hour! We'll be stuck in traffic forever!** Plan traffic routes to avoid congested areas and avoid rush hour and peak traffic times when

possible. Always avoid idling. Proper planning not only reduces fuel consumption, it also reduces the amount of time you're trapped in the car with that pesky person in the backseat.

- **Do you have to drive so herky jerky?** Accelerate smoothly and moderately and use cruise control, if available. Doing so improves mileage and front seat/backseat relations.
  - **Is it hot in here, or is it just me?** When running the air conditioner, make sure the air is being recirculated rather than bringing in hot, outside air. When it's cool enough, use flow-through ventilation instead of rolling down the windows.
- Studies show that a careful driver may get 20 percent more miles per gallon than the average driver, and 50 percent more miles per gallon than a wasteful one. And the benefits of silencing the backseat driver are beyond measurement.

## Black Gold Has Unexpected Origins

Do you know where your crude oil REALLY comes from?

Based on media reports, many of us assume that the Middle East is the main source of the crude oil that powers our nation.

Not so.

In fact, our top suppliers are our neighbor to the north, Canada, which provides 16 percent of our nation's oil supply, and our neighbor to the south, Mexico, which supplies 15.4 percent of our oil supply.

Combined, members of OPEC supply about 46 percent of the United States' daily crude oil imports. Current members of OPEC include Algeria, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela; Iran and Qatar do not export oil to the United States. Of the OPEC suppliers that do export oil to the United States, the top providers are Saudi Arabia (14 percent of our daily total); Venezuela (12.4 percent); and Nigeria (12 percent).

In fact, more than half of all the oil the U.S. imports comes from this hemisphere. Just 22 percent of our crude oil supply comes from the Middle East. So the next time you gas up your car or truck, it's very likely that most of that dollar you spent may be going to our Canadian and Mexican neighbors.

**Earn Money While You Commute**

**522-RIDE**

[www.dnr.mo.gov/energy/transportation/ride.htm](http://www.dnr.mo.gov/energy/transportation/ride.htm)